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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 9 titles discuss the following topics: (1) a comparison of the effects of three methods of vocabulary instruction on vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension; (2) the use of an elaboration strategy combined with classroom television production for increasing the literal and inferential reading comprehension of eighth-grade students; (3) objectives for the teaching of high school reading, 1973-1982; (4) the effects of text characteristics on word meaning from high school physics textbooks; (5) the effects of graphic preorganizers on tenth graders' comprehension of chapters in a social studies textbook; (6) the effects of advance organizer and direct instruction preinstructional passages on learning and retention for eighth-grade students; (7) a validation of Wittrock's generative model of reading comprehension with high school students; (8) a comparison of two instructional strategies in relation to recall of material and perceived level of engagement; and (9) a study of students' inferences during and following participation in a group directed reading-thinking activity and a group directed reading activity in social studies. (EL)

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

Clark, Diana Brewster
A COMPARISON OF THE EFFECTS OF THREE METHODS OF VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION ON VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AND READING COMPREHENSION

Fortenberry, Barbara Horton
THE USE OF AN ELABORATION STRATEGY COMBINED WITH CLASSROOM TELEVISION PRODUCTION FOR INCREASING THE LITERAL AND INFERENTIAL READING COMPREHENSION OF EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Garin, Gail West
THE TEACHING OF HIGH SCHOOL READING, 1973-1982: OBJECTIVES AS STATED IN PERIODICAL LITERATURE

Konopak, Bonnie Carroll
THE EFFECTS OF TEXT CHARACTERISTICS ON WORD MEANING FROM HIGH SCHOOL PHYSICS TEXTBOOKS

Kopans, Sondra
THE EFFECTS OF GRAPHIC PREORGANIZERS ON TENTH GRADERS' COMPREHENSION OF CHAPTERS IN A SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOK

Livingston, Maura-Elise Erikson
THE EFFECTS OF ADVANCE ORGANIZER AND DIRECT INSTRUCTION PREINSTRUCTIONAL PASSAGES ON LEARNING AND RETENTION FOR EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Schneider, Stanley Jerome
A VALIDATION OF WITTROCK'S GENERATIVE MODEL OF READING COMPREHENSION WITH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Schrimshire, Barbara A.
A COMPARISON OF TWO INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES IN RELATION TO RECALL OF MATERIAL AND PERCEIVED LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Wilkerson, Bonnie Carol
A STUDY OF STUDENTS' INFERENCES DURING AND FOLLOWING PARTICIPATION IN A GROUP DIRECTED READING-THINKING ACTIVITY AND A GROUP DIRECTED READING ACTIVITY IN SOCIAL STUDIES

A COMPARISON OF THE EFFECTS OF THREE METHODS OF VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION ON VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AND READING COMPREHENSION

Order No. DA8424211

CLARK, DIANA BREWSTER, ED.D. *Columbia University Teachers College*, 1984. 222pp. Sponsor: Professor Margaret Jo Shepherd

The effects of three methods of vocabulary instruction were compared on the acquisition and retention of word meanings and on the reading comprehension of discourse containing the words taught. It was hypothesized that teaching words in the context of familiar fairy tales, an experimental approach derived from cognitive schema theory, would produce greater gains on dependent measures than providing definitions and one-sentence examples of usage or providing definitions alone.

Fifty-five seventh grade students, of average to superior IQ (WISC-R, 1974), attending an independent urban school, were randomly assigned to three treatments (Story Context; Definitions Plus Sentence Context; Definitions Only).

Vocabulary knowledge was assessed by sentence anomaly tests, administered before, immediately after, and five days after instruction. A cumulative form of these tests, as well as a word definition test, was given two weeks after the last treatment session. Reading comprehension was measured on passages of mythological content administered pre- and posttreatment.

The significance of gains in vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension was assessed by means of *t*-tests. Three (treatment) by six (sessions) repeated measures analyses of covariance were performed to assess the significance of differential treatments effects on acquisition and retention of word meanings and on reading comprehension. Pretest vocabulary and reading comprehension scores, and scores from vocabulary and reading comprehension subtests of the Comprehensive Testing Program 2 (1982), administered prior to the investigation, served as covariates. One-way analyses of covariance compared differences in treatment effects on vocabulary learning after two weeks.

Results showed significant gains in vocabulary for all three treatment groups, both immediately after instruction and five days later, as well as significant increases in reading comprehension. However, no differences due to type of instruction were indicated on any of the dependent variables.

The findings confirm the utility of vocabulary training for increasing word knowledge and for enhancing reading comprehension. It is suggested that differential treatment effects were obscured by subjects' high verbal aptitude and their prior experience with a definition approach to vocabulary learning. Recommendations for future research include replicating the study with younger students and slower learners.

THE USE OF AN ELABORATION STRATEGY COMBINED WITH CLASSROOM TELEVISION PRODUCTION FOR INCREASING THE LITERAL AND INFERENTIAL READING COMPREHENSION OF EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Order No. DA8423476

FORTENBERRY, BARBARA HORTON, ED.D. *The University of Alabama*, 1984. 254pp.

This study attempted to determine the effectiveness of an instructional method for increasing the literal and inferential reading comprehension of eighth-grade students. The method included the use of a problem-solving strategy for elaborating an open-ended story, the creation of a script and storyboard (using imagery), and the production of a videotape. The instructional materials were designed especially for the study. Three groups were involved in the study--Treatment Group A (TGA), Treatment Group B (TGB), and a Control Group. Both treatment groups received the same treatment with the exception that TGB had no contact with the camera and VTR until after the posttest. Treatment A consisted of the following steps: (a) learning the strategy using the special materials, (b) using the strategy to elaborate the open-ended story, (c) creating a TV script and storyboard, (d) rehearsing the script using the storyboard as a guide, and (e) producing a videotape of the script. The Control Group continued with their regular instructional program. After pretesting, the treatments, which lasted 50 minutes a day, continued for 3 weeks. Posttesting immediately followed the treatments.

The subjects were regular eighth-grade students in nine intact classes at a rural junior high school (advanced and remedial classes were excluded). Three classes were assigned to each group--TGA (N = 77), TGB (N = 81), and Control Group (N = 73). A standardized test, the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT), Brown Level, Forms A and B, and a nonvalidated test of the objectives (DTOO) were used to determine effectiveness of the treatments.

The results indicated that both treatments were effective for teaching the comprehension skills specified in the objectives. However, there was no significant difference in the effectiveness of either treatment as measured by the standardized test. The following recommendations are among those suggested: (1) Extend the treatment over a longer period of time. (2) Train students and teachers in the use of the camera and VTR before treatment begins. (3) Test for differential effects among students. (4) Test for aptitude-trait-interaction effects.

THE TEACHING OF HIGH SCHOOL READING, 1973-1982: OBJECTIVES AS STATED IN PERIODICAL LITERATURE

Order No. DA8425039

GARIN, GAIL WEST, ED.D. *East Texas State University*, 1984. 145pp. Adviser: William R. Ogden

Purpose of the Study. The major purpose of this study was to identify and classify objectives for teaching high school reading in the United States as reflected in selected periodicals and to determine the agreement or disagreement of editorial comment with regard to these objectives for the period 1973 through 1982.

Procedures. Each issue of ten volumes of eight selected professional periodicals was examined for statements of objectives and editorial comment addressed to high school reading in the United States. Obtained statements were placed into the broad areas of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and cultural awareness categories. Statements were further classified into sixteen objective types and results tabulated and recorded for the 1973-1982 period according to frequency of articles, frequency of occurrence of objectives, category, authorship, and year. Editorial comment addressed to statements of objectives was recorded and reviewed. An 8.40 percent criterion was used to determine the most important objectives.

Findings. (1) The same four categories of objectives and fifteen of the sixteen objective types identified by Fulton (1976) were found in this study. (2) Statements of cognitive objectives were the most numerous, and the least common objectives were in the psychomotor category. (3) Higher educators authored the majority of articles containing statements of objectives. (4) The "most important" objectives were "interpretive-creative," "attitudes-interests," "comprehensions," "appreciation," "application to daily life," and "a fund of useful information." (5) There was little editorial comment addressed to specific objectives.

Conclusions. (1) An emphasis on higher comprehension skills reflected research contributions of psycholinguists and cognitive psychologists. (2) The high frequency of occurrence for the objective statements, "interpretive-creative" and "comprehension," along with "attitudes-interests" and "appreciation" were reflected in the

editorial comment, implying the need to balance cognitive and affective objectives to achieve greater learning. (3) Secondary school writers attached less importance to cultural awareness and psychomotor objectives than did the higher educators and miscellaneous writers. (4) Editorial comments tended to address trends and issues rather than specific objectives.

THE EFFECTS OF TEXT CHARACTERISTICS ON WORD MEANING FROM HIGH SCHOOL PHYSICS TEXTBOOKS

Order No. DA8500009

KONOPAK, BONNIE CARROLL, PH.D. *University of California, Santa Barbara*, 1984. 327pp.

Vocabulary knowledge is essential for academic success as it underlies the concepts of any content field. The purpose of the present study was to examine those factors that influence word learning from text: the extent of prior knowledge, the preciseness of the definitional information, and the amount of context provided.

Subjects were 42 high school and 26 community college students. Each level was grouped by those students with a formal science background and those students without this experience. Materials were from two high school physics textbooks. One text used an informal prose style that depended on "analogies and models" for word comprehension; the second text used a formal prose style that relied on explicit definitional information.

Four topices were chosen: work and energy, molecular structure, nature of waves, and nature of light. Each topic was described in a passage approximately 750 words long and introduced ten pertinent words. Also, a one-sentence context was chosen for each word based on the most precise definition in the passage.

Two topics were presented in the first testing session. The subjects were given the 20 words in isolation and asked to check whether they knew each word or not and to write a definition in any case. Then they received a passage context that was either formal or informal, and a sentence context that was the opposite form of prose. They read the contexts, redefined the 20 words, and wrote the context clues that assisted them. A week later they again checked their knowledge and wrote definitions for these 20 words; in addition, they were given a list of the formal one-sentence definitions with the target words deleted and asked to complete the blanks. A month later, this procedure was repeated for the second 20 words.

Results showed that prior knowledge influenced immediate and delayed comprehension, that formal prose elicited better quality definitions and aided in retention, and that passage contexts were more memorable. Educational implications suggest that preparing students for formal study is more effective than providing less precise, "familiar" texts that do not provide explicit definitional information.

THE EFFECTS OF GRAPHIC PRE-ORGANIZERS ON TENTH GRADERS' COMPREHENSION OF CHAPTERS IN A SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOK

Order No. DA8424832

KOPANS, SONDRA, ED.D. *Hofstra University*, 1984. 144pp.

The purpose of this investigation was to determine if tenth grade students with a variety of learning difficulties who used graphic pre-organizers with materials of varying levels of abstraction for a period of two months improved in reading chapters in a social studies textbook as measured by objective comprehension tests. Two units, each consisting of four chapters, were selected from a social studies textbook. A graphic pre-organizer, consisting of cartoon-like representations of each character, was developed for each of the eight chapters. The name of each character was included in every drawing. The main ideas represented by each character were written (in balloon-like form) in simpler language than in the textbook.

A total of thirty-five subjects completed this study. All subjects were below average in reading and/or writing performance and were drawn from four tenth grade Modern European History skills classes. Two of the classes were randomly assigned to the experimental group and received the eight graphic pre-organizers before reading the chapters, while the other two classes (control group) were not given graphic pre-organizers.

All of the subjects received assignment sheets prior to reading a chapter in the textbook. A graphic pre-organizer was attached to each of the experimental group's assignment sheets. All subjects were allowed to refer back to their textbooks in responding to the assignment sheets. Experimental subjects could also refer to the graphic pre-organizers. Each subject worked individually until eight chapters were completed.

A 2 x 2 analysis of co-variance was used to measure differences in reading comprehension between students who used graphic pre-organizers and students who did not use graphic pre-organizers. No significant difference in reading comprehension occurred between experimental and control groups even with materials of varying levels of abstraction. All subjects had significantly higher reading comprehension scores on the Industrial Revolution (less abstract unit) than on the French Revolution (more abstract unit). The teachers of the experimental classes, who used graphic pre-organizers observed that students seemed to improve their writing skills and seemed to require less time to complete their assignments.

THE EFFECTS OF ADVANCE ORGANIZER AND DIRECT INSTRUCTION PRE-INSTRUCTIONAL PASSAGES ON LEARNING AND RETENTION FOR EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Order No. DA8503667

LIVINGSTON, MAURA-ELISE ERIKSON, ED.D *State University of New York at Albany*, 1984. 151pp.

This study investigated the effects of advance organizer and direct instruction passages for high and low ability eighth-grade students in the learning and retention of meaningful verbal material as measured by a criterion test. As such, this study was designed to contribute to evidence about the effectiveness of Ausubel's Assimilation Theory, and the relative effectiveness of advance organizers in teaching social studies material.

The subjects for this investigation consisted of two hundred and ten, eighth-grade students in a suburban school district. Approximately equal numbers of students were assigned to both treatment groups. The students read the appropriate introduction (advance organizer or direct instruction) immediately before reading a learning passage of approximately 1500 words dealing with the caste system in India. These two groups did not have access to their respective preliminary passage during the study of the longer learning passage.

All groups were given a twenty-four item multiple choice criterion test. Retention tests were administered two and fifteen weeks later.

A 2 x 2 x 3 repeated measures analysis of variance was used to test the main effects and the interactions of the two treatment groups (advance organizer and direct instruction), the two ability levels (high and low), and the three time periods (initial, two weeks, and fifteen weeks). The Pearson Product-Moment correlation was used to measure the degree of relationship between ability and test performance. In order to further explore the impact of the independent variables (ability and treatment) upon the dependent variable (criterion test score), a multiple regression analysis was employed.

There was no statistical difference between the treatment means. High ability subjects in the advance organizer group achieved significantly higher scores than low ability students in this group on all three occasions. A similar difference was not significant in the direct instruction group. Not surprisingly, ability was found to have a significant impact on test performance. There was no significant interaction between treatment and ability.

The factor of retention time did not yield statistically significant results when viewed by itself or in interaction with other variables (time x treatment, time x ability, time x treatment x ability). Even though fifteen weeks elapsed with no intervening instruction between the first and last criterion tests, there was no significant decrease in mean scores for either the advance organizer or direct instruction group.

A VALIDATION OF WITTROCK'S GENERATIVE MODEL OF READING COMPREHENSION WITH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Order No. DA8424068

SCHNEIDER, STANLEY JEROME, ED.D. *Rutgers University The State U. of New Jersey (New Brunswick)*, 1984. 94pp. Chairperson: Martin Kling

The perspective of viewing reading comprehension as a constructive process emerged from recent research results. Wittrock projected that there is a need to stimulate learners to construct meaningful elaboration of text and to emphasize the active mode of reading.

This research investigated the power of Wittrock's generative model when high school students were given instructions to generate summary sentences after reading expository material. Doctorow, Wittrock and Marks (1978) tested the generative model by providing paragraph headings as semantic retrieval cues and instructions to generate summary sentences to sixth grade students reading narrative material. The results of their experiment strongly supported the model although the effect of these generative instructions operated more positively with low ability students than with high ability ones.

There were five conditions in the present experiment. In one of the experimental conditions the reader was supplied with paragraph headings and in another, summary sentences for paragraphs. In the other two experimental conditions students were instructed to generate summary sentences, one with paragraph headings and one without. The fifth condition was a control condition in which students simply read the story. The dependent measures were multiple choice tests--an initial comprehension test and an unannounced recall test administered one week later. Items on both tests were of three kinds--vocabulary in context, explicitly stated material and inference.

There was no enhancement of reading comprehension as measured by either of the dependent measures. Several explanations for results of no significance were offered. The nature of the generative task and instructions may not have proved beneficial as they may have deflected the attention of the readers from the material tested. This generative task may not have caused the readers to process information in a manner different from the one they ordinarily used. The use of a multiple choice test may not have tapped the cognitive interaction produced by instructions to generate.

Suggestions for further research pointed to the use of different generative tasks and dependent measures.

A COMPARISON OF TWO INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES IN RELATION TO RECALL OF MATERIAL AND PERCEIVED LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Order No. DA8428049

SCHRIMSHIRE, BARBARA A., ED.D. *Utah State University*, 1984. 374pp. Major Professor: Dr. James S. Cangelosi

The purpose of this study was to compare the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA) and the Guided Reading Procedure (GRP) in relation to recall of material presented and perceived student level of engagement during a reading activity over a two-week period.

Four classes of 8th grade U.S. history students from Appleton, Wisconsin were used in the study, with all classes receiving both treatments. Classes I and III were instructed using the DR-TA the first week, while Classes II and IV were instructed using the GRP. The methods were reversed during the second week.

Posttest instruments were developed and administered at the end of each week to measure recall of material presented in class. A three-way analysis of variance was computed on these test scores.

Student Engagement Questionnaires were filled out by the students each day as a self-report of the time they actually concentrated on the reading as well as the degree to which they enjoyed the reading. A χ^2 analysis was computed on the questionnaire results.

The following conclusions are offered: (1) There was insufficient evidence to indicate whether there was a difference in scores on the posttests measuring recall of material presented using the DR-TA or the GRP. (2) The results from the Student Engagement Questionnaire did not show that the amount of time that the students perceived that they concentrated on the reading was dependent upon the treatment used. (3) Results suggest that the teachers had an interaction effect on the differences in posttest scores.

Implications for future studies include the following: (1) Use this study as a basis for replication studies. (2) Use a control group to examine these strategies in relation to a method involving no direct instruction in terms of recall of material covered and perceived student level of engagement.

A STUDY OF STUDENTS' INFERENCES DURING AND FOLLOWING PARTICIPATION IN A GROUP DIRECTED READING-THINKING ACTIVITY AND A GROUP DIRECTED READING ACTIVITY IN SOCIAL STUDIES

Order No. DA8426708

WALKERSON, BONNIE CAROL, ED.D. *Northern Illinois University*, 1984. 212pp.

This study described and compared the process of comprehension attainment of social studies text material during two group reading activities, the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA) and the Directed Reading Activity (DRA). Inferences generated during the group activities and during individual postreading and introspective reports were examined.

Eight male and eight female eighth grade students of average and above average reading ability were assigned to two groups balanced in terms of sex and reading ability. Both groups read the same segment from a social studies text customarily used in their social studies instruction, but from a unit they had not previously read. Lessons were videotaped and later transcribed.

The investigator conducted individual interviews with the 16 subjects. Subjects were asked to recall the most important idea and all other ideas from the lesson. Subjects were shown the appropriate videotape, which was stopped following each discussion segment. Subjects were asked to reconstruct their thinking during that segment. Interviews were audiotaped and later transcribed.

Transcripts were analyzed to determine the quantity and types of inferences generated by each group in each assessment context and to determine the quantity and types of information including in inferences. A qualitative taxonomy of inferences, developed from descriptive schemes proposed by Taba, Durkin, Fraenkel, and McNaughton (1971) was used for categorization of inferences and information included in inferences. Provision was made for scorer reliability. Hypotheses were tested by means of *t* tests and chi square tests. A descriptive analysis was also made.

Statistically significant differences between groups were found in: (a) the quantity of marginal and intended inferences generated in the lessons, (b) the types of inferences generated in the lessons and in introspective reports, (c) the quantity of information included in inferences in the lesson, and (d) the types of information included in the lessons and in introspective reports.

Results showed that the process of comprehension was different in the DR-TA and the DRA. The DR-TA was superior in encouraging interaction of students' prior knowledge with textual material and in facilitating students' generalizing beyond the textual information.

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